**Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution**

The **Fourteenth Amendment** (**Amendment XIV**) to the [United States Constitution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Constitution) was adopted after the [Civil War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Civil_War) as one of the [Reconstruction Amendments](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reconstruction_Amendments) on July 9, 1868.

The Fourteenth Amendment provides a broad definition of [citizenship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citizenship_Clause), overruling the decision in [*Dred Scott v. Sandford*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dred_Scott_v._Sandford) (1857), which held that blacks could not be citizens of the United States.

Its [Due Process Clause](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Due_process) has been used to make most of the [Bill of Rights](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Bill_of_Rights) [applicable to the states](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incorporation_of_the_Bill_of_Rights). This clause has also been used to recognize [substantive due process](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Substantive_due_process) rights, such as parental and marriage rights, and [procedural due process](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Due_process#Procedural_due_process) rights. Certain steps are required before depriving people (individual and [corporate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corporate_personhood_debate)) of life, liberty, or property.

The amendment's [Equal Protection Clause](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Equal_Protection_Clause) requires states to provide equal protection under the law to all people within their [jurisdictions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jurisdiction). This clause later became the basis for [*Brown v. Board of Education*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brown_v._Board_of_Education) (1954), the Supreme Court decision which precipitated the dismantling of [racial segregation in the United States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Racial_segregation_in_the_United_States).

The amendment also includes a number of clauses dealing with the [Confederacy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confederate_States_of_America) and its officials.